

THE ORIENTATION OF CHURCHES.

MR. EDWARDS.—I was surprised to find from an article in *THE BUILDER* of the 25th inst., that a casual remark of mine on the orientation of churches, which I let fall in the course of my lecture on "Medieval Architecture," recently delivered at Liverpool, should have given rise to observations in some local journals. The subject presented itself to my mind unpremeditatedly, as is frequently the case in the delivery of un-read lectures. I recollect stating at the time, that I did not then remember the precise orientation of St. Peter's at Rome, but that I was quite certain that the altar was not at the east end. The opinion of your correspondent concurs with mine. St. Peter's stands approximately, not exactly, east and west, with the altar to the west. St. John's the Lateran has a similar direction, with a twist rather more to the south; and this, the "*Orbis et urbis mater*," in the centre of Christian Europe! In St. Maria Maggiore the altar end is to the north-west; in St. Giovanni e Paolo, west; in St. Gregorio Romano, close to it, nearly south; as also in St. Andrea della Valle, where the pompous funeral service for O'Connell was lately performed; and the same is observable in St. Ignazio, the church of the Collegio Romano, the focal point of orthodoxy! On entering Rome by the Piazza del Popolo, the traveller finds to his left the interesting church of St. Maria, with its altar nearly east. But the two churches immediately opposite the city gates have their entrances to the north, their altars to the south! Now these are not taken as rare instances of exception to the rule laid down by the present authorities of the Church of England, for not one-fourth of the Roman churches have their altars at the east end; but they are amongst the most ancient and most important of those sacred buildings. Consequently, the observance is not a Catholic one (*non ab omnibus*). I believe that the primitive Anglican Church did, at a very early period, adopt this tradition; but surely with us the question arises, whether we are bound to this fragment of antiquity hand and foot, at whatever cost or inconvenience, or whether we may regard it, as does the Church of Rome, in the light of a non-essential, subordinate to other considerations of locality, and the relative position with other objects. A glance at Nolli's fine map of Rome will bear out my remarks, or reference to the compendious plan of Letarouilly.—Believe me to be, &c.,

T. L. DONALDSON.

ARCHITECTURE AND ANTIQUITIES IN WALES.

CAMBRIAN ARCHEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION.

A SOCIETY for the examination and preservation of the antiquities of Wales has been established, chiefly, as it seems, through the exertions of the Rev. H. Longueville Jones; and the first annual meeting of the members was held last week at Aberystwith. It lasted four days, and many interesting papers were read. Sir S. Glynne, Bart., took the chair, and Lord Dungannon, Sir Samuel Meyrick, the Dean of Hereford, the Dean of Bangor, and others, assisted. Among the papers read, which related to architecture, were the following:—

On the "History and Architecture of the Church of Clynnog Fawr, Carnarvonshire," by the Rev. H. L. Jones, illustrated with a series of sketches; on the "History and Architecture of Strata Florida Abbey," by the Rev. George Rogers; on the "General State of Welsh Antiquarian Remains, and on certain desiderata connected with them."

An excursion to Strata Florida Abbey afforded much interest; and the Dean of Hereford, after giving an account of the visit at the evening meeting, observed, that "If the only result of the society's visit in South Wales was the careful exploration of this beautiful ruin, their time would not have been thrown away; and if each present extended his inquiries only to his own immediate neighbourhood, he would be doing a vast amount of good."

It is proposed to raise a subscription to clear out the remains of a ruin which possesses a history of greater interest than any other ecclesiastical structure in the country.

On the motion of Lord Dungannon, it was

resolved that the restoration of Clynnog Fawr Church, and the chapel of St. Beuno, there, be entrusted to Mr. H. Kennedy and Mr. Penson, architects. The Dean of Bangor mentioned an interesting fact, that 60*l.* had been granted by the Queen for the purpose of repairing the Tudor tomb in Penmydd Church, Anglesey. The committee decided that the next general meeting should be held in Carnarvon, sometime in 1848.

EARLY STATE OF LAMBETH MARSH.

THIS tract of land, according to Hollar's map, extended from near Stangate to Broad-wall, and was bounded by the river on the north-west and the ancient way or road called Lambeth Marsh on the south-east. From excavations, it is evident that the flow from the river has not extended beyond the said southern line. The lowest part of this land is where the late Belvidere Brewery was, with its large piece of ornamental water.

Some idea of its early state may be formed from examination of the cuttings for the railway and lines of sewerage now making at the great terminus, near York-road, a space in size equal to Grosvenor-square. It is there evident that a very great deposit derived from the river, had accumulated from the rise of the Thames, bringing on occasional inundations. In some places, where the water has flowed in with greater rapidity, gravel stones have been carried in; at other parts where the water might have remained nearly quiescent (as in a dock), there is to be found merely river mud, settled and pressed, so as to appear as a kind of dark wet clay, but the whole contains fragments of twigs and wood; and even at the lowest parts are to be found bones, small pieces of Roman tile, and of brick, which is an undoubted proof that this sediment is not of extremely ancient date. It is of the same nature as the present adjacent shore.

The names of Narrow-wall and Broad-wall have been derived from the embankments subsequently made. Broad-wall became a road leading from the river to St. George's fields.

On removing the ground for the foundation of the new church in Lambeth Marsh, it appeared as if a creek had extended to near the road there, which may account for the ancient road taking such a bend on its way from Stangate (the ferry from the palace) to Kent-street, the then only way to Dover. The mud is not to be found so far south as the Westminster-road, nor in any other place, excepting within the limits above mentioned.

T. H.

RAILWAY JOTTINGS.

THE result of the meeting between the railway and exchange authorities, in the expression of an opinion that no new contracts on lines authorized last session should be entered on, except under special circumstances. Each company, however, will doubtless look on the probable increase of traffic on their own main lines, by the formation of new branches and extensions, as amongst those 'special circumstances' entitling them to make exception to the proposed rule, even tho' it were imperative. Agreements with contractors to induce them to proceed at a moderate speed, with the works in hand, are also recommended, and indeed are highly recommendable in probably most cases, though they will form a somewhat curious contrast with the bonuses for precipitate haste so recently prevalent. Meantime, although in some cases matters have already come to a crisis, as on the East Lancashire line, where it has been resolved to stop entirely the works on the Preston and Liverpool portion of the line, and to induce, if possible, the East Lancashire Company also to suspend the progress of that part of the line near Liverpool which the two companies are constructing jointly, and on the Birmingham and Salisbury line, where a considerable reduction has been already made amongst the mechanics and others employed at the Andover establishment, at which a winter's work had been looked for and depended on,—still, matters on the whole progress as if no real ground of danger, or more evil data than the present, as yet were dreaded; the Ambergate, Nottingham, and Boston, and Eastern Junction shareholders, for instance, having just been

engaged in the pleasing duty of increasing the number of their directors from thirteen to a corps of sixteen at 1,200*l.* per annum each, and that by a majority of no less than 20,000 shares—more than all of whom were confiding proxies; while, on the other hand, masons, unthankful for their present mercies, are, at Perth, refusing to 'enlist' for 2*s.* a week, at the general termions, even though invited by the stirring appeal of the drum; and at Swansea and Newport they have just struck work so determinedly, that a bargain has been counter-struck between the engineers and the contractors, that stone shall be turned into wood, and bridges be built by carpenters and joiners, so as to save the masons trouble, a mode of settling the difference which cannot but strike and astonish the masons very forcibly, if it do not altogether petrify their wooden heads into stone itself, by way of compensation for so unexpected a transfiguration of stone blocks into blocks of wood.—We can see, we imagine, through the mists of future progress, that our proposed amendment and adoption of the Austrian imperial law against all sundry managers of 'railways causing accidents,' up even to the occasional 'suspension' of a director, as an illustrious example, is on the way to, if not on the eve of, final accomplishment. One of the recent legion of public complainants, awake to the right remedy or preventive, says—"The learned judges have hitherto always told us that wilful negligence, causing human death, involved the crime of manslaughter. Are railroad directors exempt from the operation of such a law? or how, otherwise, does their wilful negligence escape punishment? If a guard were attached to every two carriages of a train, a constant chain of communication with the engine-driver from all parts of it would be kept up, available as well by night as by day, and a similar number of breaks would insure the speedy stoppage of any train on the occurrence of danger, and probably save many lives. These precautions have already been often suggested, and recklessly disregarded; a fact which, if it were properly impressed by every corner on the minds of his jury, when impelled in consequence of fatal railroad accidents, would, no doubt, in many cases, produce such verdicts as would soon compel the adoption of measures dictated by mere common sense, and only resisted by the most detestable avarice. Every fresh line will but add to our dangers." The coroner on the unfortunate victims next to be sacrificed at the shrine of the railway Mammon will not fail, we trust, to point out the path of law and duty to the immaculate twelve. Meantime, *pro forma*, we may chronicle another of the plentiful suggestions to which it is plainly useless to expect attention in the only yet available quarter. A correspondent of the *Leeds Intelligencer* proposes the adaptation of atmospheric pressure, in a reservoir of portable dimensions, with a force pump and whistle, to the production of a code of signals for such purposes as those already pointed out *ad nauseam*.—It appears, from an appropriate return of the number of railway accidents, to be presented to the new members of Parliament, that during the last half year, ending 30th of June, and of course exclusive of the more recent fatalities, 101 human beings were killed, and 100 more or less injured, on railways in Great Britain and Ireland,—a number equivalent of course to 200 killed and as many wounded every year. The progress of the Shrewsbury railway bridge has been delayed by the swelling of the river during the late rains.—Mr. Knight, contractor of the works on the Rugby and Leamington line, has not only provided for the comfort of his workmen by the erection of a quadrangle of convenient cottages, but for their moral welfare by the erection of a chapel for divine worship on Sundays.—The Birkenhead Docks have been made free, for all shipping landing cargoes, by the railway company, who are themselves to pay the tonnage rates,—6*d.* for foreign and 1*d.* for coasting vessels; so that virtually no dues whatever are now charged on ships entering or goods landed at this port.—The express trains from London to Liverpool, via the Trent Valley line, will perform the distance—200 miles—in five hours, or at the rate of 40 miles per hour.—The works contracted for by Messrs. Coulthard and Allen, between Clapham and Casterton, on the North-Western, are progressing, and the village of Ingleton is filled with work people